



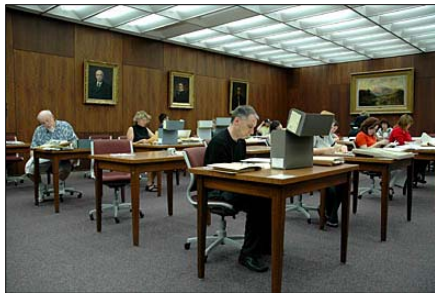
**WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

816 State Street
Madison, WI 53706
608-264-6440
www.wisconsinhistory.org

Fact Sheet

Our Mission: The Wisconsin Historical Society helps people connect to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories.

Organization: The Society was founded in 1846, two years before Wisconsin became the 30th state. It ranks as one of the largest, most active, and most diversified state historical societies in the nation. As both a state agency and a private membership organization, it receives about 65 percent of its funding from the state of Wisconsin. The other 35 percent comes from membership fees, admission fees, gifts, trust funds and grants. A 36-member Board of Curators governs the Society.



Archives: The Archives collects manuscripts and artifacts from private individuals and organizations. In addition to Wisconsin history, holdings include several collections of national scope:

- Early American exploration & settlement (Draper manuscripts)
- Social action movements, such as civil rights
- Mass communications history
- U.S. labor history

The Archives also serves as the State's official archive and holds all historical state records. It also holds extensive visual and sound records, including more than 4 million historical photographs, posters, oral history recordings, and motion picture films. Through a cooperative agreement with the University of Wisconsin System and the Superior Public Library, the archives operates a network of 13 area research centers located at UW campus libraries throughout the state, at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland, and the library in Superior, making its collections accessible statewide.

Library: The Library is the state historical library as well as the U.S. and Canadian history library for the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Holdings include:

- 3.8 million printed and microform North American volumes
- Second largest American newspaper collection in the U.S.
- Extensive U.S. and Canadian history collection

The Library is designated as an official documents depository by the governments of Wisconsin, the United States and Canada. It provides reference and information services in person, over the telephone, through the mail and on the Society's web site. It lends most of its materials to users in person and to other libraries throughout the state and the nation via interlibrary loans.



Wisconsin Historical Museum: The Museum, located on Madison's Capitol Square, contains exhibits on Wisconsin history from prehistoric times to the present day. They include:

- Galleries devoted to prehistoric Wisconsin and first inhabitants
- Permanent exhibits documenting Wisconsin agricultural history, environmental history, industry, tourism, political history, and Wisconsin's settlement by European immigrants
- Two floors of changing exhibits, orientation theater, and Museum store



Public History: The office of public history provides a wide array of publications, programs and services that present fresh perspectives on Wisconsin history.

- Publishes scholarly and popular history materials including a quarterly magazine and bimonthly membership newsletter
- Works to enhance the teaching of state and local history in Wisconsin's public and private schools
- Provides technical assistance, consulting services to over 350 local historical societies & museums
- Publishes books dealing with the history of the state and nation
- Public History also administers the National History Day program throughout Wisconsin for elementary and secondary students

Historic Preservation: The Society's historic preservation office, in partnership with communities, organizations and individuals, works to identify, interpret, and preserve ancient and historic places for the benefit of present and future generations. Historic preservation:

- Administers tax credit programs historic building rehabilitation
- Administers Wisconsin's National Register of Historic Places
- Conducts archaeological and underwater archaeological research
- Provides technical assistance to local organizations and government
- Reviews public projects for their effects on historic properties
- Administers the state's historical markers and burial sites preservation programs
- Maintains inventories of historic buildings, archeological sites and burial sites



Historic Sites: The Society's network of 10 historic sites promotes tourism and provides for the comprehensive study, appreciation and enjoyment of Midwestern frontier history.

The historic sites, located throughout Wisconsin, include:

Old World Wisconsin, Eagle, WI
Outdoor living history museum of immigrant farm and village life

Pendarvis, Mineral Point, WI
A restored Cornish miners' colony

Villa Louis, Prairie du Chien, WI
Magnificently restored Victorian country estate

Madeline Island Museum, La Pointe, WI
A museum of Apostle Islands exploration and settlement

H.H. Bennett Studio, Wisconsin Dells, WI
Historic studio of the man who made Wisconsin Dells famous

Wade House, Greenbush, WI
1860s stagecoach inn, sawmill and carriage museum

Circus World, Baraboo, WI
America's circus museum, built on the original site of the Ringling Bros. Circus winter quarters

Stonefield, Cassville, WI
1900s farming village, Agricultural Museum and Governor Nelson Dewey home

First Capitol, Belmont, WI
The birthplace of Wisconsin's territorial government

Reed School, Neillsville, WI
A 1940s one-room school